



U.S. Embassy Abidjan Cote d'Ivoire

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This daily press review is compiled by the Information Section of the Public Affairs Office of the American Embassy in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. For questions regarding this service, please contact: Mr. Teko Folli in the Public Affairs Press Office, TekoFX@state.gov.

December 22, 2010

The address made yesterday by incumbent President Gbagbo was the major highlight in today's press. Dailies continued to report on allegations of human rights violations which underscored the political standoff and the recent international sanctions against Gbagbo's regime.

1. In an address broadcast yesterday on the national state media RTI, incumbent President Gbagbo spoke for the first time since the beginning of the political standoff between him and President Ouattara. **Fraternite Matin (a state-owned daily)** published the whole address in which incumbent Gbagbo invited an international committee to re-examine the results of last month disputed presidential run-off, to avoid a bitter power struggle with his rival which could into civil war. "The investigative committee could be headed by the African Union and also involve the West African organisation ECOWAS, the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, Russia and China," he reportedly said, adding that the committee will be tasked to "analyze objectively the facts of the electoral process ...to solve this crisis peacefully." "I don't want another war, I don't want any more Ivorian blood to be spilt," **Le Temps (a daily close to the FPI party)** reported him as pleading in the course of his address. For the Ivorian leader, there is no doubt of his victory since the National Constitutional Council credited him with 51.45% of the ballot. "I won the election with 51.45 per cent of the vote. I am therefore the legal president of Cote d'Ivoire thanks to the Ivorian people who renewed their faith in me," Mr. Gbagbo said in what could be regarded as a clear message to the international community on his determination to cling to power despite global pressure on him.

"The troubles we see today in the country are caused by the refusal of my opponent to submit himself to the laws, rules and procedures that apply in our country," he continued, blaming Mr. Ouattara and the international community. "They make war on us not because we suppressed the democratic expression of the Ivorian people, but because they deny the Ivorian people's sovereign right to choose its own leaders, respect its institutions and live in a free country," he said.

Reacting to the address, partisans of President Ouattara qualified it as a delaying tactic to deceive his opponents and the international community. According to **Le Patriote (a daily close to the RDR Party)**, nothing should be expected from this tricky address.

2. Dailies continued to report on allegations of human rights violations. Thus, **Le Jour Plus (a daily close to the RDR Party)** carried a banner headline featuring a picture of a mass grave. According to the daily the actual casualties of the recent violent incidents is as follows: 200 people were killed, 1000 others were injured, 40 people are missing and 732 people are being arbitrarily kept in custody by the national defense and security forces. In a statement made yesterday, the Ivorian Prime Minister Soro Guillaume called again on the UN to act before "the planned genocide actually happens." According to the Ivorian Premier, a mass grave of sixty people was found last Sunday in a suburb district of Abidjan. Armed individuals, presumably, Liberian and/or Angolan nationals hired by

the Gbagbo's regime, are allegedly engaged in mass killings and kidnappings during the curfew. Most of the victims are said to be partisans of President Ouattara or individuals with northern names, the paper said. The Ivorian Premier called for a popular uprising against the Gbagbo regime and an effort to force the former Ivorian leader to leave.

Still on the violent incidents, ***Le Mandat (a daily close to the PDCI-RDA party)*** noted that two Ivorian human rights and civil society activists are missing since Saturday when armed elements from the national defense and security forces arrested them. According to the daily, the two men, Mr. Ouattara Brahim a.k.a. Hegel and Mr. Coulibaly Abdoulaye have not been seen since then.

Nord-Sud Quotidien (a daily close to the Ivorian Prime Minister), noted cases of sexual assault. According to the daily, some 300 women living in Abobo reported that they have been sexually assaulted by armed elements from the national police after a demonstration in front of a police station to press for the release of their relatives arrested by law enforcement agents.

In this context, ICC Prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo warned on Tuesday he would bring charges against anyone who incites atrocities in Cote d'Ivoire. The information was reported by ***L'Expression (a daily close to the RDR Party)***. Mr. Moreno-Ocampo also singled out Charles Ble Goude (Gbagbo's newly named "Minister of Youth and a key leader in Gbagbo's camp), who he said risked inciting atrocities through his hardline messages to supporters. "He is inciting people... Mr. Ble Goude has to be on notice: if you continue doing that and there are crimes, you will be prosecuted," Moreno-Ocampo said.

"The court is monitoring reports of killings and abductions of individuals by security forces loyal to Gbagbo, Mr. Moreno-Ocampo said.

3. ***L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (an independent daily)*** noted that the international pressure on Gbagbo's regime continued. The United States have decided to take sanction against the incumbent President Gbagbo and his partisans. Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs William Fitzgerald said in a conference call on Tuesday, the sanctions imposed on the regime include travel restrictions. "All options are open for the United States and African and European countries," he said. "We're going to see if the pressure will be increased in the future. We can't say if we'll do it but all the options are open and on the table." He said those options include removing Gbagbo by force. He said it was unlikely that U.S. troops would participate if that option was taken and that it was more likely to be an African force.

With more on the political crisis, ***Le Temps (a daily close to the FPI party)*** informed readers that a squad of 26 snipers has been deployed in Cote d'Ivoire on the initiative of French authorities. According to the daily, this squad is tasked to assassinate the Ivorian leader.

December 21, 2010

The decision made yesterday by the UN Security Council to extend the mandate of its peacekeeping mission in Cote d'Ivoire despite incumbent President Gbagbo's call for an immediate departure of the UN troops from Ivorian soil made news in today's national press amidst the political standoff underscored by the pressure of the international community.

1. The fifteen members of the UN Security Council unanimously decided yesterday under resolution 1962 to extend until June 30, 2011 the mandate of its peacekeeping mission in Cote d'Ivoire. The information was widely reported in today's press. It comes three days after incumbent president Gbagbo's regime ordered the immediate departure of the 8.650 UN military and police on the grounds that the mission has failed and has shown itself to be guilty of serious misconduct in the Ivorian crisis. Thus, **Fraternite Matin (a state-owned daily)** qualified the decision as a challenge to the Ivorian leader. **Notre voie (a daily close to the FPI party)**, on its part, underscored that the UN intends to invade the country by force, adding that the mission might increase its troop in the country though they have been requested to leave.

Providing details on the new resolution, **L'Inter (an independent daily)** noted that the UN Security Council has strongly condemned the "attempt to usurp the will of the Ivorian people and undermine the integrity of the electoral process and urged all Ivorian parties and stakeholders to respect the will of the Ivorian people and the outcome of last month election." Moreover, the paper reported, the UN Security Council could authorize deployment of additional troops on a temporary basis depending on requirements. The Council also reaffirms its readiness to impose targeted sanctions against people who threaten the peace process and national reconciliation, obstruct the role of UNOCI and other international actors and those accountable for serious violation of human rights and international humanitarian law. **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (an independent daily)**, **L'Expression (a daily close to the RDR Party)**, **Le Jour Plus (a daily close to the RDR Party)** and **Le Patriote (a daily close to the RDR Party)** carried similar reports on the subject matter.

2. The ongoing tension between the two rival camps was also reported on as both camps blamed each other for the recent violent incidents which have claimed the lives of at least a score of people. In an interview reported by **Notre voie (a daily close to the FPI party)**, an official from the FPI Party, Mr. Affi N'guessan, accused partisans of President Ouattara of trying to put the country in total mayhem. According to Mr. Affi, last week street demonstrations were nothing but an armed insurrection. The regular forces were forced to fight back; hence the killings in both camps. "It is high time for Mr. Ouattara to come into the republic and turn his back on the rebellion," Mr. Affi was reported as saying.

Similarly, according to **Le Nouveau Courrier (a daily close to the FPI party)**, Mr. Emile Guirieoulou, the Minister of Interior of President Gbagbo's regime, rejected the accusation of human rights abuses, arguing that the national defense and security forces

defending themselves during the violent demonstrations. He underscored the Gbagbo regime's determination not to back down, qualifying the recent sanctions of the European Union as fruitless measures.

On their part, President Ouattara's partisans informed readers that the leader of the young patriots, Mr. Charles Ble Goude (currently the Minister of Youth in the Gbagbo regime) is preparing to commit genocide. According to *Le Jour Plus* (a daily close to the RDR Party), his recent rallies with the youth are meant to plan attacks on UN facilities and personnel with the ultimate goal of triggering violent confrontations with UN troops.

According to **Nord-Sud Quotidien (a daily close to the Ivorian Prime Minister)**, the worst is yet to come. The daily noted that massive killings are being reported since last week's demonstration. In a statement made Sunday, the spokesperson of the Government of Prime Minister Soro condemned these human rights abuses and called on the international community to react in a timely manner.

3. On international pressure on Gbagbo's regime, **Le Nouveau Courrier (a daily close to the FPI party)**, noted that French official De Villepin called for mediation instead of sanctions. According to the daily, Mr. De Villepin and President Sarkozy are at loggerheads on the Ivorian issue. French opposition leader Jean-Marie Le Pen is said to share the views of Mr. De Villepin on the issue, the paper said.

December 20, 2010

News reported today and over the weekend was highlighted by the major political standoff following last month's presidential run-off. Dailies continued to report on violent incidents which have plagued the street demonstration of partisans of President Ouattara last week in Abidjan and upcountry. The demand by incumbent President Gbagbo for an "immediate" departure of the UN troops and the French Licorne forces was also in the limelight of today's press as the political unrest seems to reach its climax.

1. The major political controversy in Cote d'Ivoire was underscored last week by street demonstration called by partisans of President Ouattara. The demonstration turned to violence when demonstrators clashed with army personnel loyal to incumbent President Gbagbo. The police and armed elements are said to have deliberately opened fire on the marchers. Figures on victims remained yet unclear but the death toll is estimated to some 48 people with other 219 people injured nationwide according to **Le Nouveau Reveil (a daily close to the PDCI-RDA party)**. Three law enforcement agents close to incumbent President Gbagbo have lost their lives in the incidents according to **L'Inter (an independent daily)**. **Le Mandat (a daily close to the PDCI-RDA party)**, on its part warns against a planned genocide on the initiative of President Gbagbo. According to the daily two mass graves have been discovered at the outskirt of Abidjan in Yopougon.

In this context, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Luis Moreno-Ocampo warned on Thursday the different protagonists against prosecutions he intends to undertake in the event of human rights abuses which could result from the violence. "If they start to kill people then it's a crime and we will pursue them," **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (an independent daily)** reported ICC prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo as saying. "The reality is that some people in Ivory Coast are planning attacks and we know that. And I want to tell them clearly, if you do that... you will be prosecuted," he further added.

2. In a statement made Saturday and broadcast on the national state television, RTI, the Gbagbo regime has ordered the UN peacekeeping mission UNOCI and the French Licorne forces to immediately leave the country. According to **Fraternite Matin (a state-owned daily)** which reported the full statement read by the spokesperson of incumbent President Gbagbo's government, Mrs. Jacqueline Lohoues Oble, the UN and the Licorne Forces have failed in their mission. She said the UN mission has not remained neutral in the election dispute and accused it of arming the New Forces rebels allied with opposition leader Alassane Ouattara.

"The state of Ivory Coast considers that UNOCI has shown itself to be guilty of serious misconduct, which indubitably proves that it is an agent of destabilization and contributes to the further division of the Ivorian people," she reportedly said.

"UNOCI and Licorne Forces Out," a banner headline in **Notre Voie(a daily close to the FPI party)** read. The daily also published the statement pressing the UN forces and the Licorne Forces to leave the country without further delay.

A separate letter published in the daily and signed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of President Gbagbo's regime, Mr. Alcide Djedje, reiterated the call.

Reacting to the decision of the Gbagbo's regime, the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, has rejected the demand. "UNOCI will fulfill its mandate and will continue to monitor and document any human rights violations, incitement to hatred and violence, or attacks on UN peacekeepers," a UN statement issued on Saturday said according to Le Nouveau Reveil.

Similarly, **Le Mandat (a daily close to the PDCI-RDA party)** noted that the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, expressed concern about "the growing evidence of massive violations of human rights" in the restive Cote d'Ivoire since Thursday." In the past three days there has been more than 50 people killed, and over 200 injured," she said in a statement issued in Geneva, vowing "to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions."

On his part, Prime Minister Soro Guillaume of the Ouattara government qualified Gbagbo's call for the UN troops to quit the country an "illegitimate" request since he [Gbagbo] has no authority for such a demand. **(L'Intelligent d'Abidjan)** According to Le Nouveau Reveil, the United States is reviewing different options to settle the crisis. In a statement made Friday, US official William Fitzgerald said the US could impose sanctions such as travel bans on Mr. Gbagbo and his relatives. Military actions are not to exclude, Le Nouveau Reveil said.

3. In what could be seen as a "troop review", most dailies reported on a series of rallies undertaken by the leader of the young patriots, Mr. Ble Goude. "Be ready to set your country free," **Le Nouveau Courrier d'Abidjan (a daily close to the FPI party)** reported Mr. Ble Goude as saying in the course of one of his rallies yesterday in Abidjan.

December 15, 2010

The major political standoff in Cote d'Ivoire was again in the limelight of today's national press. Dailies reported on a prospective demonstration by partisans of President Ouattara to press incumbent President Gbagbo to surrender power. The prevailing tension in both camps and the ongoing pressure of the international community were also reported on.

1. The political situation in Cote d'Ivoire remains tense and unpredictable with two rival governments which mutually claim legitimacy. A clash between armed elements from both camps nearly happened two days ago in Abidjan, somehow adding more tension to the already difficult situation. In this context, partisans of President Alassane Ouattara have decided to hold a "peaceful rally" which should lead them to the national television channel RTI. Most dailies close to President Ouattara reported on the prospective demonstration, which could be a major turning point in the standoff. Thus, *Le Patriote* carried a banner headline which read: "Thursday, D-Day." In a prominent report, the paper outlined the bottom line of the prospective mass demonstration, which, according to the paper, is to allow the legitimate Director, recently appointed by President Ouattara, to take office. The daily reported that the building of the national television channel RTI has been occupied by mercenaries and militia bands since the beginning of the political crisis, preventing the national media from operating as expected.

Still on the issue, **Le Nouveau Reveil (a daily close to the former ruling PDCI-RDA party)** noted that the mass protest has been called on the initiative of Prime Minister Soro Guillaume, also in charge of Defense. In a statement made yesterday at the Golf Hotel in Abidjan, Prime Minister Soro called on the national army personnel to join the move and show their loyalty to the elected President.

In a separate development, the paper noted the call of the Ivorian Prime Minister is a blatant sign that negotiations and mediation efforts have failed. According to the paper, incumbent President Gbagbo remains adamant on his refusal to surrender power, hence the decision of partisans of president Ouattara to hold street demonstrations to force him to leave power. However, the paper added, the peaceful demonstration is likely to turn out violent, since partisans of President Gbagbo, especially some army officers loyal to the Ivorian leader and some militia groups intend to fight back.

With more on the issue, **Nord-Sud Quotidien (a daily close to the Ivorian Prime Minister)** added that Prime Minister Soro could also count on the Forces Nouvelles military branch, which has decided to support the initiative. "We will be escorting Soro to the RTI (...) The Forces Nouvelles are loyalist forces and will be acting as such," the paper reported Commandant Issiaka Ouattara a.k.a Wattao as saying.

2. In the opposite camp, the regime chaired by Ake N'gbo held yesterday in Abidjan its first cabinet meeting. The information was reported by **Fraternite Matin (a state-owned daily)**, which noted that important decisions related to good governance have been taken. Thus, the paper added, all the members of the government are requested to

make an assessment of their personal assets to allow the government to combat high-level corruption and embezzlement. Internal audits in the different ministries will also be carried out to ensure the integrity of government members.

On the political situation, **Le Temps (a daily close to the ruling FPI party)** allegedly accused France of arming elements from the Forces Nouvelles. According to the daily, the recent clash between elements from the Forces Nouvelles and the regular army was the visible part of a hidden plot by France to help the rebel forces to overthrow President Gbagbo.

In a separate article, the daily noted that the patent support of the US Ambassador in Cote d'Ivoire to President Ouattara merely stemmed from the fact that the two men have had a friendly relationship since 1997, when President Ouattara was working at the International Monetary Fund. According to the paper this is the sole reason why Ambassador Carter is maneuvering to oust President Gbagbo.

Still on the international pressure, **Notre Voie(a daily close to the ruling FPI party)** accused the US and French Ambassadors in Cote d'Ivoire of harassing the Director of the National Television RTI, Mr. Brou Amessan. According to the daily, the two men are using threats and potential sanctions to force him to cooperate with them.

In another development, the paper made a parallel between President Obama's address at the Ghanaian Parliament in 2009 and the situation Cote d'Ivoire to the extent that what Africans need is not strong men but strong institutions, such as the Constitutional Council in Cote d'Ivoire, which ruled on the November 28 election.

3. Still on the political crisis, **L'Inter (an independent daily)** reported that UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has advocated new mediation for a peaceful settlement of the Ivorian crisis. According to the daily, the announcement was made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of former President Gbagbo, Mr. Alcide Djedje, in the course of an interview yesterday. However, the paper added, a non-negotiable prerequisite is requested by partisans of President Ouattara: i.e., to acknowledge Ouattara as the President. The mediation seems therefore difficult, the paper further added.

December 14, 2010

The political turmoil in Cote d'Ivoire was underscored yesterday by a violent clash between the national defense and security forces loyal to incumbent president Gbagbo and military personnel from the Forces Nouvelles. The new sanctions taken against President Gbagbo and his partisans by the European Union were also reported on.

1. The major political crisis in Cote d'Ivoire was underscored yesterday by a clash which opposed elements of the national defense and security forces loyal to President Gbagbo and a detachment of the Forces Nouvelles based at the Golf Hotel in Abidjan. Most dailies reported on the incident, which occurred on the main road leading to the Golf Hotel where President Ouattara Alassane and his partisans have found shelter since the beginning of the post-electoral crisis. According to ***Fraternite Matin (a state-owned daily)***, the incident happened when armed elements from the Forces Nouvelles refused to stop at a check point controlled by the national defense and security forces. As a result, a quarrel began between the two rival groups.

In a similar report, ***Le Quotidien d'Abidjan (a daily close to the FPI party)*** noted that the incident is diversely reported on. According to speculations, the incident came after the regular forces tried to disband a group of "jeunes patriots" who were planning to march on the Golf Hotel. Another version noted that the incident was triggered by the move of the national security and defense forces who attempted to attack the Golf Hotel.

In a different version, ***Le Patriote (a daily close to the RDR Party)*** qualified the incident as "a provocation de trop" by soldiers loyal to President Gbagbo. According to the daily we nearly missed the worst.

2. The sanctions on incumbent President Gbagbo continued. According to ***Le Patriote (a daily close to the RDR Party)***, the European Union increased the pressure on the Laurent Gbagbo's regime in Côte d'Ivoire Monday, faced with its refusal to acknowledge the victory of Alassane Ouattara in the presidential election. "These measures will include a ban on visas and the freeze of possessions", states a declaration adopted on Monday in Brussels by the European Minister of Foreign Affairs. It explains that the Union decided to immediately adopt restrictive measures targeted against those who oppose the peace process and national reconciliation and particularly threaten the successful conclusion of the electoral process". "They will especially target the personalities who refuse the authority of the democratically elected president; a first list should be adopted quickly", the text adds, clearly referring to Laurent Gbagbo and his collaborators. The EU also promises "to take measures to support the democratically-elected authorities" around Alassane Ouattara and invites its diplomacy Chief, Catherine Ashton, to "make propositions in this regard".

December 13, 2010

News reported today and over the weekend was again highlighted by the political standoff opposing incumbent President Gbagbo and President Ouattara, who both claim victory over last month's presidential run-off. Mediation efforts and consultations in view of finding a peaceful outcome of the political impasse were reported on as well.

1. A week after President Gbagbo and President Ouattara swore themselves in as heads of state of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, the political standoff remains unsolved despite the call of the international community for respect of the results of the poll and negotiation efforts. In this context, President Gbagbo and his partisans are accusing the international community, especially France, of interference in Ivorian domestic affairs. The information was reported by **Fraternite Matin (a state-owned daily)**, which published a statement which was read yesterday on the national TV channel RTI by Mr. Emile Guiriellou, the Minister of Home Affairs in the Government of Prime Minister Ake. Mr. Guiriellou accused foreign ambassadors and diplomats of maneuvering to hamper the legitimacy of President Gbagbo, who was declared winner of the presidential poll by the national constitutional council. Mr. Guiriellou called on the diplomatic corps to remain neutral on issues pertaining to home affairs, the paper said.

In a similar attitude, the National Defense and Security Forces chief of staff, General Phillipe Mangou yesterday called on the UN forces in Cote d'Ivoire and the Licorne to remain impartial as stated in their mandate. According to **Fraternite Matin**, General Mangou has initiated a series of tours in the major army barracks to spur troops.

Reacting to the allegations of interference in Ivorian domestic affairs, the government of France, through its Minister in charge of Cooperation, Mr. Henri de Raincourt, indicated that the accusations are baseless. "There is not and there will not be any interference," **L'Inter (an independent daily)** reported Mr. Raincourt as saying. "Domestic affairs are the sole responsibilities of the Ivorians, who made their choice in the course of last month's presidential runoff," Mr. Raincourt reportedly said.

2. With more on the actions of the international community to settle the impasse, the United States, through its Ambassador in Cote d'Ivoire, Phillip Carter III, has initiated a series of consultations with the different political actors. **Soir Info (an independent daily)** noted that Ambassador Carter met over the weekend with the Minister in Charge of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Jean-Marie Kacou Gervain at the Golf Hotel. According to the daily, discussions focused on the political crisis. Ambassador Carter underscored that efforts should be made for a peaceful transition as "violence is definitely not an option." "I think a political or diplomatic solution could be found to the matter," Ambassador Carter said, adding that the peaceful option is commonly shared by the rest of the international community.

Le Nouveau Reveil (a daily close to the PDCI-RDA party), **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (an independent daily)** and **L'Expression (a daily close to the RDR Party)** also reported on the meeting between the two men.

Nord-Sud Quotidien (a daily close to the Ivorian Prime Minister) carried a similar report, adding that the US diplomat called again for the respect of the results of the poll. According to the paper, the US Ambassador indicated that it is important to maintain contacts with the two protagonists in the perspective of a friendly settlement of the political crisis.

However, in a separate development, the paper noted that additional coercive measures could be taken against President Gbagbo to force him to back down and surrender power to the elected president. "We are closely monitoring the situation," the paper reported US official Phillip Crowley as saying.

December 10, 2010

The political standoff in Cote d'Ivoire was again in the limelight of today's national press. The two parallel governments are, on each side, trying to control the country while the international community maintains the pressure for respect of the results of the poll.

1. The dualism of the executive power in Cote d'Ivoire is underscored by two governments -one led by Prime Minister Soro Guillaume and another one headed by Prime Minister N'Gbo. In this context, both camps are in a race to control the country's finance and administration. According to ***Nord-Sud Quotidien (a daily close to the Ivorian Prime Minister)***, President Ouattara has taken new measures in this respect. The paper reported Mr. Achi Patrick, the spokesperson of the government, as warning contractors on potential unauthorized commitments they may be making with the "illegitimate" government of President Gbagbo. "Any commitment of this kind is void and will not be acknowledged by the government," Mr. Achi reportedly said.

Similarly, ***Le Patriote*** called on all civil servants and military personnel not to collaborate with any other government but the legitimate one headed by Prime Minister Soro Guillaume.

With more on the activities of President Ouattara, ***Le Mandat(a daily close to the PDCI-RDA party)*** noted that the UN Special Envoy in Cote d'Ivoire, Mr. Y. J. Choi, had talks yesterday with the Ivorian head of state. According to the daily, the post-electoral situation was the topic of their discussion.

On his part, Laurent Gbagbo called on the Ivorian people to be serene, as war is in no way an option for the settlement of the crisis. The information was reported by ***Le Temps (a daily close to the FPI party)***, which noted that he received yesterday a delegation of Tchaman people in Abidjan.

Reporting on the same ceremony, ***Fraternite Matin (a state-owned daily)*** added that Mr. Gbagbo is open to dialogue and negotiations. "Let us sit down and discuss," the paper reported Mr. Gbagbo as saying.

2. According to ***Fraternite Matin (a state-owned daily)***, the international community, including the United Nations and the United States, are closely monitoring the situation in Cote d'Ivoire. In a statement made Wednesday, the UN Security Council called on the different political stakeholders to respect the will of the Ivorian people and condemn any effort to go against the will of the people who participated in these elections. It stands ready to impose targeted measures against anyone who tries to impede the peace process, obstruct the work of UNOCI, or commit violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

Still on international pressure, ***Le Patriote (a daily close to the RDR Party)*** informed readers that the Ivorian leader could face targeted sanctions from the United States in case he refuses to back down and abide by the will of the Ivorian people.

According to the paper, Mr. Phillip J. Crowley, spokesman for the US Department of State, said that the position of the United States is similar to that of the 11 heads of state or presidential representatives who participated in the ECOWAS summit and called on Mr. Gbagbo to abide by the election results and allow President Ouattara to take his rightful seat as the head of government.

L'Expression (a daily close to the RDR Party) carried a similar article, adding that the United States could be forced to freeze the personal assets of the Ivorian leader and his partisans if he remains adamant on his position to retain power.

December 9, 2010

The ambiguous political situation in Cote d'Ivoire continued to make headlines in today's national press. Both camps remained adamant on their respective positions, putting the country into political confusion with two parallel governments.

1. "Everything will be all right soon," **Fraternite Matin (a state-owned daily)** reported incumbent President Gbagbo as saying yesterday in the course of a ceremony with populations from the Sud-Comoe region. According to the daily, President Gbagbo was receiving congratulations from traditional chiefs of the southeastern region of Cote d'Ivoire. On the occasion, he called on the Ivorian people to resume work.

On the activities of President Ouattara, **Soir Info (an independent daily)** noted that President elect Ouattara saluted the recent decision of the ECOWAS –the Economic Community of West African States - which has decided to acknowledge his victory over President Gbagbo and called for respect of the results of the poll. Speaking yesterday at the Golf Hotel in Abidjan, where he has found shelter since the crisis, President Ouattara said the decisions of the ECOWAS testify to the commitment of the regional institution to democracy, peace and political stability in the region. "I hope Mr. Gbagbo will finally be wise enough to abide by the will of the Ivorian people," President Ouattara was reported as saying. On the suspension of Cote d'Ivoire by the ECOWAS, President Ouattara said he feels sorry for this and will work for a timely lifting of this sanction.

2. On potential sanctions, **Le Nouveau Reveil (a daily close to the PDCI-RDA party)** informed readers that a no-fly list has been elaborated by President Ouattara's government. Mr. Achi, the spokesperson of the government, said the list profiles individuals from Gbagbo's government who are allegedly accused of human rights violations and will be handed over to the UN and other human rights watchdogs.

On international pressure, **Le Nouveau Courrier d'Abidjan (a daily close to the FPI party)** reported on a press conference held by the UN Special Envoy in Cote d'Ivoire on the certification of the presidential run-off results. According to the daily, Mr. Choi tried unsuccessfully to justify his "biased" certification in favor of Mr. Ouattara.

In a separate development, the paper criticized the decision made Tuesday by the ECOWAS calling President Gbagbo to step aside. According to the daily, the decisions of the regional organization were quite predictable as it was chaired by people opposed to the Ivorian leader.

3. On home affairs, most dailies reported on a press conference held by government-appointed administrators on duty in the zones where the poll was cancelled on the grounds of violence and frauds. According to **Soir Info (an independent daily)**, which cited Mr. Daouda Ouattara, the poll was in general fair in these zones, and the decision of the Chairman of the Constitutional Council not to accept the results from these zones was unfair.

4. Still on home affairs, entrepreneurs and private sector professionals warned against the potential economic problems that could result from the major political crisis in Cote d'Ivoire. Reporting the statement made yesterday by the chairman of the coalition of entrepreneurs and businessmen operating in Cote d'Ivoire, ***Le Nouveau Reveil (a daily close to the PDCI-RDA party)*** published the whole version of the statement in which the collation called on Ivorian actors and the international community to find a peaceful and timely way out to the crisis.

December 8, 2010

The political standoff in Cote d'Ivoire remains the major issue in today's national press. The activities of the dual cabinets of the two rival governments and the final communiqué of the ECOWAS following a special summit on Cote d'Ivoire yesterday were reported on as well. The ongoing pressure of the international community calling for the respect of the results of the poll and the UN Security Council meeting were reported too.

1. The new government of incumbent President Gbagbo was announced yesterday. Providing details, ***Fraternite Matin (a state-owned daily)*** noted that the new cabinet of President Gbagbo is made up of thirty three members and is chaired by Mr. Ake N'gbo, a professor of economy, appointed as Prime Minister. According to the daily, the cabinet held its first meeting yesterday and is at first sight a "homogeneous team" in total contrast with the former official government which gathered people from various political branches. Among the newly appointed ministers, Mr. Charles Ble Goude is designated as the Minister in charge of Youth, Vocational Education and Employment. *[Note: Mr. Ble Goude, once a student activist, has played an important role in Ivorian politics as a supporter of the policies of Laurent Gbagbo. He has organized protests and demonstrations in support of the president and in protest against the rebellion in the north of Côte d'Ivoire.]*

With the same authority, President Alassane Ouattara and his cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Soro Guillaume are at work. According to ***Le Patriote (a daily close to the RDR Party)***, President Alassane signed yesterday an important series of decrees. Thus, the paper said, new high-level officers of the national administration, including state media officers, foreign representatives and finance officers have been appointed.

2. The pressure of the international community continued to be reported on. Thus, ECOWAS, -the Economic Community of West African States - in a statement made yesterday at the end of a crisis summit on Cote d'Ivoire, called on President Gbagbo to step aside with no further delay. The information was much reported in the press. "We call on Mr. Gbagbo to respect the results of the presidential poll as certified by the United Nations in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI)," the statement said according to ***Soir Info (an independent daily)***.

A banner headline in ***L'Expression (a daily close to the RDR Party)*** read: "Gbagbo must go." According to the daily, which was reporting the message of President Obama in which he called on the Ivorian leader to surrender power to the elected president Ouattara Alassane, the United States could impose targeted sanctions in case the verdict of the poll is not respected. For the White House, the paper added, Mr. Alassane is the winner of the presidential poll and therefore the legitimate President. The same information is reported by ***Le Patriote***, which noted that the US President warned President Gbagbo against the consequences of his "unfair actions".

Similarly, Germany, through its Foreign Minister, Mr. Guido Westerwelle, also called on Mr. Gbagbo to abide by the "will of the Ivorian people" and leave the power to the

winner of the presidential poll, Mr. Alassane Ouattara. The information was reported by ***Le Nouveau Reveil (a daily close to the former ruling PDCI-RDA party)***.

With more on the international pressure, the UN Security Council gathered to analyze the situation in Cote d'Ivoire. The information was reported by ***Nord-Sud Quotidien (a daily close to the Ivorian Prime Minister)***, which noted that on the occasion the UN Special Envoy in Cote d'Ivoire, Mr. Y. J. Choi outlined the different steps which led to the certification of the presidential poll and the recent developments on the ground.

In a similar report, ***Le Nouveau Courrier d'Abidjan (a daily close to the ruling FPI party)*** noted that members of the UN Security Council are at loggerheads on the Ivorian crisis, as Russia vetoed a joint statement on the crisis on the grounds that the UN has bypassed its mandate and is interfering in the country's domestic affairs. ***Notre Voie (a daily close to the ruling FPI party)*** also carried a similar report.

December 7, 2010

The political crisis in Cote d'Ivoire was again the major highlight in today's national press. The first cabinet meeting of the new government chaired by Prime Minister Soro Guillaume and the ongoing mediation efforts of the African Union and ECOWAS made news as well.

1. The political situation in Cote d'Ivoire still remains unclear four days after the two political rivals in the presidential run-off were declared winners by two different bodies – on the one hand, the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) and, on the other, the National Constitutional Council. Both camps have already appointed their respective Prime Ministers, and a new government chaired by Prime Minister Soro Guillaume is “by now at work” and held its first cabinet meeting yesterday. According to ***L'Inter (an independent daily)***, home security, state media and foreign affairs were on the agenda of the inaugural cabinet meeting. “This is the unique government of the country (...) We have opted for a peaceful handling of the situation to avoid bloodshed,” the spokesperson of the government, Mr. Achi, said, addressing an issue raised by a journalist.

Simultaneously, incumbent President Gbagbo has appointed Mr. Ake N'Gbo as his Prime Minister. According to ***Notre Voie (a daily close to the ruling FPI party)***, Mr. Ake, who was out of the country, is now back and has already started consultations to set up a new cabinet.

2. On mediation efforts, former South-African President Thabo M'Beki left the country yesterday evening after a 48-hour emergency visit. Mr. Mbeki met with the different actors involved in the crisis. ***L'intelligent d'Abidjan (an independent daily)*** questioned the outcome of the mediation as the situation remains with two presidents and two prime ministers. “We will hand over an itemized report of our mission to the African Union and do everything possible to safeguard peace and social cohesion in the country,” Mr. Thabo reportedly said.

Still on mediation efforts, ***L'Inter (an independent daily)*** noted that ECOWAS – the Economic Community of West African States - is to gather today in Abuja, Nigeria to assess the situation in Cote d'Ivoire. According to the paper, the meeting of the 15 members of the community is much awaited as it could come out with a solution to the crisis.

3. The two rival parties are also blaming each other for the violence. According to papers close to President Ouattara, the death toll of the recent demonstrations is up to 60 people and 576 people were injured.

December 6, 2010

The major political crisis in Cote d'Ivoire, where both incumbent President Gbagbo and opposition leader Alassane Ouattara claimed victory over the presidential run-off and simultaneously swore themselves in, made major headlines in today's press. The mediation of former South-African President Thabo Mbeki and reported violent post-electoral clashes made news as well.

1. The confusion in Cote d'Ivoire has been exacerbated by the decision made last Friday by the Chairman of the National Constitutional Council, Mr. Paul Yao N'dre, who rejected the results of the Independent Electoral Commission and proclaimed incumbent President Gbagbo as the winner of the run-off with 51%. Most dailies devoted large columns to the issue during the weekend and in today's reports. Thus **Soir Info (an independent daily)** carried a banner headline reading: "Two presidents for a single state." The deadlocked situation, the paper added, is a real threat for the country, as both men have sworn themselves in as the new president of the country. Incumbent President Gbagbo was sworn in at the presidential palace, whereas President Alassane did the same at the Golf Hotel, where he and his supporters have found shelter since last week. The controversy is also underscored by dual governments respectively chaired by Prime Minister Soro Guillaume, who was appointed by President Alassane, and another Prime Minister, Mr. Ake N'gbo, appointed by President Gbagbo.

2. In this contest, the international community has unanimously called for respect of the results of the poll and urged the two protagonists to act responsibly. The African Union has sent former President Thabo Mbeki to mediate between the two electoral rivals. The information was reported in **Fraternite Matin (a state-owned daily)**, which noted that Mr. Mbeki had talks with all the bodies involved in the electoral process, including President Gbagbo, President Ouattara and the UN Special Envoy in Cote d'Ivoire. However, the success of the mediation is as yet unclear as **Le Nouveau Reveil (a daily close to the RDR Party)** noted that President Gbagbo definitely said no to M'Beki and **L'Inter (an independent daily)** for its part reported President Alassane as urging President Gbagbo not to cling to power. Mbeki's arrival in the capital Abidjan marked the re-opening of the country's borders, closed since the crisis blew up on Thursday. President Ouattara, who has secured international endorsements, told Mbeki he was in no mood for compromise and wants Laurent Gbagbo to go. Earlier, according to the paper, Mbeki remained tight-lipped after he appeared not to get the reassurances he was after from Laurent Gbagbo, who is clinging to power with the blatant support of the national army.

3. Many violent incidents were reported over the weekend in Abidjan and upcountry according to most dailies. **L'Inter (an independent daily)** noted that at least 4 people lost their lives in Abidjan and 17 people in the western city of Issia in clashes with the police and rival groups. According to the paper the situation does not bode well for the coming days, as violence is escalating.

December 3, 2010

The controversy on the results of the presidential run-off and post-electoral incidents were the major items in today's national press. The decision of Ivorian authorities to close all natural borders of the country and to suspend international media broadcasting on the Ivorian land was reported on as well.

1. In a statement made yesterday, the Chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI), Mr. Youssouf Bakayoko, announced the victory of Mr. Alassane Ouattara who is said to have secured 54.10% of Sunday's vote against incumbent President Gbagbo, credited with 45.90%. Most dailies reported on the controversial statement, which came out few minutes after the Chairman of the Constitutional Council –the body tasked to validate and announce the final results of the poll- indicated that the Commission had exceeded the three-day deadline for the release of the subject results. Reports in papers such as ***Fraternite Matin (a state-owned daily)***, ***L'Inter (an independent daily)*** and ***Soir Info (an independent daily)*** said that we are in a total imbroglio. Contradictory speculations are reported and the outcome is definitely unclear, while papers close to both camps either claim victory or reject the results of the Commission. Thus, for ***Le Patriote (a daily close to the opposition RDR Party)***, there is no doubt on the result: Mr. Ouattara has won. A banner headline in the paper read: "His Excellency." The paper is adamant, Mr. Ouattara is the new President of the country. In a separate development, the paper indicated that the Chairman of the Constitutional Council, Mr. Yao N'Dre, could in no way invalidate the result of the poll. A similar tone is reported in ***Le Nouveau Reveil (a daily close to the former ruling PDCI-RDA party)***. The paper published the statement of "President elect" Ouattara, in which he paid tribute to the Ivorian people, the Facilitator of the Political Agreement of Ouagadougou, President Blaise Compaore, and called for reconciliation, social cohesion and peace. On the other side, pro-governmental papers such as ***Notre Voie, Le Nouveau Courrier, Le Temps (a daily close to the ruling FPI party)***, ***Le quotidien d'Abidjan*** rejected the results announced by Mr. Bakayoko. A banner headline in ***Notre Voie (a daily close to the ruling FPI party)*** said the announcement is a coup attempt. For ***Le Nouveau Courrier (a daily close to the ruling FPI party)***, the chairman of the Commission was forced to announce the result by armed men and noted that the legal deadline for the release of the results has expired and therefore the results are null and void, adding that the final decision is in the hands of the Constitutional Council. According to the paper the international community is putting vain pressure on Ivorian authorities, who are not likely to back down.

2. Still on the issue, ***Le Patriote*** published the statement in which the UN Security Council welcomed the announcement by Côte d'Ivoire's electoral authorities of the provisional results of Sunday's presidential run-off and urged the supporters of the candidates to refrain from any provocation or recourse to violence throughout the electoral process. Ambassador Susan Rice of the United States, which holds the Council's presidency for December, also called on the different actors to respect the results and abide by the legal provisions in case of claims to safeguard peace.

3. The post-electoral process has been underscored by a series of violent incidents. According to ***L'Inter (an independent daily)***, at least four people said to be partisans

from the RDR party lost their lives Wednesday night following clashes with armed individuals. According to Mr. Ouattara Drissa, the President of the youth branch of the RDR party, the death toll is actually eight people, fourteen injured and twenty-nine missing.

Still on the issue, the spokesperson of the National Defense and Security Forces (FDS), Colonel-major Babri Gohourou Hilaire, made a statement yesterday on the national TV station in the course of which he indicated that the clash occurred when army staff on duty fought back in an exchange of fire with individuals. He added that a file has been opened to shed light on the deadly incident. He recommitted the population to strictly respect the overnight curfew.

With more on measures taken by Ivorian authorities, ***Le Temps (a daily close to the ruling FPI party)*** informed readers that all natural borders of the country are closed and the broadcasting of international media has been suspended nationwide until further notice.

December 2, 2010

News in today's Ivorian press say the electoral process in Cote d'Ivoire is deadlocked, a day after the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) failed to announce the provisional electoral results of Sunday's run-off vote. Different calls from the international community demanding the publication of the results are the other major news items in the press.

1. With a picture of Youssouf Bakayoko, the Chairman of the CEI on its front page, **L'inter (an independent daily)** carries a prominent headline saying that since midnight, the legal deadline for the announcement of the provisional results of Sunday's vote, the electoral body is politically "offside". According to the paper, Bakayoko and other members of the electoral body are no longer competent to announce the results of the duel that opposed incumbent President Laurent Gbagbo and his rival Alassane Ouattara. The paper refers to constitutional provisions that say the commission has three working days to announce the provisional results to be finalized by the Constitutional Council. The deadline was yesterday and the electoral commission has lost any prerogatives vested in it, notes the paper, which also says that disagreements between members sitting on the electoral commission have caused the delay. The only way out of this political imbroglio today, comments the paper, is that the Constitutional Council takes the dossier and rules over all the electoral complaints.

2. The state-owned daily **Fraternite Matin** also carries a banner headline telling readers that the CEI could not announce the provisional results yesterday due to a blockade at the electoral commission. The paper cites the independence and composition of the electoral commission as the principal cause of the problem. Not only are members sitting on the commission are dominated by the opposition RHDP, comments the paper, but the main problem is the fact that decisions at the commission are taken on a consensual basis. And the announcement that the elected president will be Gbagbo or Ouattara should abide by the principle of consensus, comments the paper, which goes on to indicate that this principle however is hitting against the interest of each member of the commission, who strongly goes by the position of the party he/she represents within the commission. The dilemma of the commissioners is that no one wants to be seen by his/her party as an accomplice of the defeat of his/her candidate, comments the paper. As a result, says the paper, the whole nation is being hijacked by an independent commission, which in practice is not.

3. Amidst the controversy over the results of Sunday's run-off, a prominent banner headline in **Notre Voie (a daily close to the ruling FPI party)** says the LMP [*La Majorite Presidentielle: the name of the ruling FPI party and other parties and associations that are supporting the incumbent during the elections*] yesterday referred the case relating to allegations of massive fraud, violence and intimidation believed to be perpetrated in Korhogo, Bouake, Ferke and Sinematiali to the Constitutional Council. Speaking at a press conference yesterday in Abidjan, the President of the ruling FPI party, Pascal Affi N'Guessan, said: "We're fighting against attempt to confiscate power," reports the paper. "We'll fight relentlessly," **Soir Info (an independent daily)** quotes

Affi N'Guessan as saying. **Le Nouveau Courrier (a daily close to the ruling FPI party)** also carries a prominent story accusing UN Special Envoy in Cote d'Ivoire Y.J. Choi of masterminding what it calls a complot designed to use political ruses, the street and the international community to impose by all means Alassane Ouattara as the next president of Cote d'Ivoire.

4. "Ouattara is very angry," says a prominent headline in **Le Nouveau Reveil (a daily close to the opposition PDCI-RDA party)** which quotes the Ivorian opposition leader as saying: "The CEI should proclaim immediately the results." Ouattara, the paper says, was speaking yesterday and used the opportunity to address a message to his rival President Gbagbo. "To my brother Laurent Gbagbo, I would like to ask him to respect the statement that both of us signed in the presence of the UN.... I reiterate my commitment that whoever wins this election should bring together Ivorians, work for reconciliation and avoid any witch-hunting," the paper quotes a message delivered by the opposition as saying. "This situation is unacceptable and inappropriate," **Soir Info** quotes the opposition leader as saying.

5. In a reaction to this political stalemate in Cote d'Ivoire, **Le Patriote (a daily close to the opposition RDR party)** carries a front-page picture of Secretary Clinton together with a headline reading: "This hijack of the democratic process is unacceptable." For the United States, it is abnormal that the results of Sunday's elections have been delayed, reports the paper which quotes State Department's spokesperson Philip Crowley as saying: "It is unacceptable for any party to hijack the democratic process." "Results must be released immediately, and without further delay.... The United States stands firmly behind the Ivoirian people and supports them in their quest for democracy," Crowley reportedly said.

6. **L'Expression (a daily close to the opposition)** also carries a statement issued Tuesday by Secretary Clinton, saying that "Cote d'Ivoire's elections are an opportunity for the nation to emerge from years of crisis, return to the community of democracies, and build a successful and prosperous future for all Ivoirians. The United States calls on all Ivorians to act responsibly and peacefully, to allow this future to become reality for the people of Cote d'Ivoire." "We strongly urge the candidates to allow the tallying and reporting of results to proceed unhindered, and to honor the results when they are announced. The United States calls on all Ivoirian leaders to act responsibly and peacefully, to allow this future to become reality for the people of Cote d'Ivoire," **Le Nouveau Courrier** also quotes the statement as saying. **Le Nouveau Reveil (a daily close to the opposition PDCI-RDA party)** also carries the full text of the statement under a headline saying: "US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton is putting pressure on Gbagbo." In a related development, **Fraternite Matin** reports that UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon yesterday exhorted the electoral commission to release the results.

7. **Nord-Sud Quotidien (a daily close to the Ivorian Prime Minister)** carries a picture of Secretary Clinton under a headline reading: "Abidjan could suffer diplomatic isolation," as France, the United States and Japan have stepped up pressure for the "immediate" release of the results. The paper also notes that the diplomatic shuttle that

took place the whole day yesterday at the headquarters of the CEI was a sign that the international community supports the results of the polls. With more on the results of Sunday's presidential elections, the paper says the European Union, the African Union, the International Organization of Francophonie and the Carter Center characterized the elections as democratic.

8. While the international community is calling for "immediate" announcement of the results, ***Le Temps (a daily close to the ruling FPI party)*** carries a picture of a comfortably-seated Gbagbo in a brown-striped outfit with a banner headline reading: "The president: It's him." Contrary to this picture, ***Le Mandat (a daily close to the opposition PDCI-RDA party)*** carries a photo gimmick of a triumphant looking Ouattara being transported by supporters with a headline reading: "I salute you, Mr. President." Meanwhile, ***L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (an independent daily)*** carries pictures of both candidates and warns that there are risks of civil and military clashes in Cote d'Ivoire.

December 1, 2010

A statement issued yesterday by Secretary Clinton urging Cote d'Ivoire's political leaders to "act responsibly and peacefully" after Sunday's run-off vote hits the front page of many Ivorian dailies today. The delay in the announcement of Sunday's election results and an incident yesterday at the headquarters of the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) are the other major stories in the press which also looks at the latest political developments in Cote d'Ivoire.

1. **A front-page story in the state-owned daily *Fraternite Matin*** says that the United States has urged the Ivorian political leaders "to act responsibly and peacefully." The paper carries the full text of a statement issued yesterday by Secretary of State Clinton. "Results of the elections: The message of Clinton to Gbagbo and Ouattara," says a prominent story in ***L'inter (an independent daily)***, which also publishes the full text of the statement with a picture of Secretary Clinton. "The US calls for calm," writes ***Le Nouveau Courrier (a daily close to the ruling FPI party)*** quoting the statement as saying that "Cote d'Ivoire's elections are an opportunity for the nation to emerge from years of crisis, return to the community of democracies, and build a successful and prosperous future for all Ivoirians." "US has stepped pressure," writes ***Soir Info (an independent daily)*** which highlights a portion of the statement that says: "We strongly urge the candidates to allow the tallying and reporting of results to proceed unhindered, and to honor the results when they are announced." "Cote d'Ivoire's elections are an opportunity for the nation to emerge from years of crisis, return to the community of democracies, and build a successful and prosperous future for all Ivoirians. The United States calls on all Ivorian leaders to act responsibly and peacefully, to allow this future to become reality for the people of Cote d'Ivoire," the paper also quotes the statement as saying. "Respect all the results that will be announced," says a front-page story in ***Le Patriote (a daily close the opposition RDR party)*** which carries the full text. A report in ***Le Jour Plus (a daily close to the opposition)*** says that the French Socialist Party and the USG have called for the publication of Sunday's vote. The report says that Secretary Clinton on Tuesday called on the Ivorian political leaders "to act responsibly and peacefully." The report also says that, in a statement, Secretary Clinton urged the two candidates "to allow the tallying and reporting of results to proceed unhindered and to honor the results when they are announced." "France and the United States talked to Gbagbo yesterday," says a prominent story ***Le Nouveau Reveil (a daily close to the opposition PDCI-RDA party)***.

2. On the controversy over Sunday's election results, ***Fraternite Matin*** carries a banner headline trying to explain the reasons behind the delay in the publication of the provisional results. According to the paper, the Independent Electoral Commission, the body that organized Sunday's presidential elections is entangled in a political quagmire, while it has only three days to announce the results of the polls, beginning from the date the vote took place. The paper goes on to say that just after the closing of the polling stations on Sunday, the ruling LMP [*La Majorite Presidentiel: the name of the ruling FPI party and other parties and associations that are supporting the incumbent during the elections*] is protesting against what it saw as "violence and illegal confinement of its

representatives; most of whom were chased out from the polling stations in the zones under the control of the New Forces." The LMP, the paper says, also complained about "ballot box stuffing, fictitious high turnout and high scale fraud," resulting in the decision of the presidential camp to demand that the electoral body "nullify" the results in those areas. Supporters of the incumbent president are not preaching in the desert, claims the paper, which quotes some observers groups as saying in their reports that "the vote in the zones under the control of the New Forces flouts criteria and norms of free, transparent and fair elections." The paper suggests that if these allegations of vote rigging and manipulation turn out to be true, then there could be serious discrepancies between figures obtained after hand counting of the ballots and the electronic counting; and this could trigger what the paper foresees as "war of figures" and probably "a stalemate." To conclude, the paper says the dispute over the results of Sunday's elections is "inevitable."

3. In another story **Fraternite Matin** tries to explain to readers what could be the way out in case results are not published within the three-day deadline. The paper quotes article 38 of Cote d'Ivoire's Constitution which stipulates that "In case of serious events, notably a breach of state security, natural catastrophes that hinder the normal conduct of the elections or the announcement of the results, the President of the commission in charge of organizing these elections shall refer the case to the Constitutional Council, which in 24 hours shall rule on whether the electoral process should stop or the proclamation of the results should be suspended."

4. With a picture of the incident that occurred yesterday at the headquarters of the CEI, **Le Jour Plus** accused the ruling FPI party of preventing the electoral body from announcing provisional results of the vote; while **Le Nouveau Courrier** denounces "an electoral hold-up." "Shame on you!" says a banner headline in **Le Patriote (a daily close to the opposition RDR party)** which accuses President Gbagbo of preventing the announcement of the results. In a front-page story, **L'inter** notes confusion at the electoral commission, after journalists, including the state-owned TV, were expelled yesterday.

5. Meanwhile, a prominent report in **Notre Voie (a daily close to the ruling FPI party)** says that the electoral body is paralyzed, as members of the commission are divided over conditions of the vote in the Northern provinces. The paper also carries a picture of UN Special Envoy in Cote d'Ivoire Y.J. Choi, accusing him of playing what it characterizes as "unfair game." In the story, the paper comments, "Choi lacks inspiration", and wonders how the UN diplomat could say that "Despite incidents, which were sometimes violent, in the west and north of the country, the second round of the election was also generally conducted in a democratic climate." In a separate story, the paper also accuses election observers of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) of "misinforming" the public about the conditions of Sunday's elections. The paper also tells readers that, after tallying of 3 million ballots, President is leading.

6. But , **Le Nouveau Reveil** carries a different story and quotes the campaign director of Alassane Ouattara as saying that "the Ivorian opposition leader is the true winner of the vote." In a related development, the paper quotes Dr. Mabri Toikeusse, the spokesperson of Mr. Ouattara, who vowed that the opposition RHDP coalition will not allow "Gbagbo to steal this victory." The paper also speculates that the incumbent president yesterday attempted to stage an electoral hold-up, but the army refused to follow him. According to the paper, the Chairman of the CEI yesterday escaped being abducted.

7. With more on the controversy over Sunday's election in Cote d'Ivoire, **Nord-Sud Quotidien (a daily close to the Ivorian Prime Minister)** quotes the Carter Center as saying that "the vote was transparent." "Despite some irregularities, the vote and ballot counting were conducted in a transparent manner," the paper quotes the Carter Center as saying. Another report in this paper quotes the head of the European Union observers group, Christian Preda, as saying that "the irregularities noted during the vote cannot impact on the results." The paper also quotes the head of the African Union observers group, Joseph Kokou Koffigoh, as saying that the conduct of the second round of the presidential elections was "satisfactory." Finally, the paper publishes a statement issued Monday by the Prime Minister, who invited the population to remain calm.